



LIVABILITY

Livable communities are communities that are safe, healthy, and economically secure. A prerequisite for livability is a human and community-centered approach to policy that encourages density, active transportation, and mixed-use development.

A FIERCE ADVOCATE IN CONGRESS AND BEYOND

Elected to Congress in 1996, Earl has made it his mission to make the federal government a better partner to state and local governments in the movement to build more livable communities. As Congress' chief spokesperson for livable communities, Earl was one of the early members of Congress to draw the connection between better transit, sustainable infrastructure and more connected, livable communities. His earliest work in Congress was advocating for federal investments and regulations that encouraged communities to use transit as a problem-solving tool.

That work stemmed from his experience in the Oregon State Legislature and as the City of Portland Transportation Commissioner. Earl was part of the group of political leaders who built out Portland's transit system in the 1980s and 1990s, fulfilling the promise of the region's land use system, cleaning up its air pollution, and creating development opportunities and an urban fabric that made Portland the livability capital of the United States.

In 2009, Earl founded the Livable Communities Task Force, a bipartisan, bicameral task force focused on advancing livability initiatives and better connecting housing, transportation, and environmental planning at the federal level.

As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Earl created the Small Starts program in 2009, which was intended to help streetcar projects across the country receive federal funding and technical assistance from the federal government. Over subsequent years he led efforts to modify and improve the program to make it work for local communities and to ensure that streetcar and bus rapid transit projects across the country could be built quickly and efficiently. That program led to over 22 streetcar projects around the country so far, including three in Portland, Oregon.

As a senior member of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, Earl has used his position to shape the tax code to build livable communities. He championed an effort to ensure the tax code doesn't unduly incentivize people to drive a car instead of choosing an active transportation option. In 2008, his legislation creating a bicycle commuter benefit for biking to work was enacted into law. In 2015, he successfully secured parity between the transit commuting benefit and the benefit for parking. Because of his efforts, employees can now receive up to \$300/month from their employers tax-free to tax public transportation to work.

After Joe Biden's presidential election victory in 2020, Earl used his position on the Ways and Means Committee to begin to advance the single largest measure to combat the climate crisis in



Congressman Earl Blumenauer ■ Third District of Oregon

American history: the Inflation Reduction Act. The Inflation Reduction Act delivered \$385 billion in energy and climate investments, including investments in solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, energy efficiency, clean manufacturing, and vulnerable communities most impacted by environmental degradation. In total, it puts the United States on a path toward a 40 percent reduction in emissions by 2030.

Earl authored several of the clean energy provisions contained in the Inflation Reduction Act. These include the production tax credit and investment tax credit to incentivize wind and solar projects; direct pay and renewable energy credit transferability provisions to make project financing more efficient; legislation to reinstate the Superfund Tax; clean transportation incentives, including an expanded electric vehicle credit for new and used vehicles; an expanded credit to charge e-bikes and e-scooters; credits to electrify commercial fleets; and incentives to make commercial buildings more energy efficient and sustainable. Each of these provisions will help reduce carbon emissions and lessen our dependence on fossil fuels.

Because of Earl's work in Congress, communities large and small have the resources and incentives to be more livable than ever.